

3491. *Moderation and Charity,*

Recommended in a

S E R M O N

Preach'd at

K E S W I C K,

To the Associated P R O T E S T A N T

Dissenting Ministers

O F

Cumberland and Westmoreland.

By JOSEPH DODSON, ^{1c} A. M.

L O N D O N :

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Moderation and Charity

Recommended in a

SERMON

Preached at

K. E. S. W. A. C. K.

To the Ancient Protestant

Dissemination of Ministers



Churches and Universities

By JOSEPH DODSON, A.M.

LONDON

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THE
PREFACE.



I is almost as uncommon for a single Sermon to appear in Publick, with a Preface, as it is for a large Book to appear without one: But here I think myself particularly obliged to give some Account of the most prevailing Reasons which determin'd me to Preach, and now to Publish the following Discourse; which comes Abroad so contrary to my first Intention.

When I was admitted to preach, as a Candidate for the Ministry, I was, God knows, a rash, censorious, and ignorant Zealot; had high Conceits of my own Orthodoxy; and did not stick at condemning both Persons and Opinions, I had little, or no other Acquaintance with, but what I had from the unkind and partial Representations of Men; for whom I entertain'd a very undue Regard.

But, I bless God, I was not long contented with an Implicit Faith. I soon prevail'd with my self, to make some serious Searches into the Nature of the Christian Religion; and to study, with some Degree of Exactness, the principal Controversies in Divinity, particularly those, which were manag'd with the greatest Heat and Uncharitableness, and in which I,

IV The PREFACE.

my self, could not allow of any Sentiments different from my own; without very hard Thoughts of the Persons who maintain'd them.

I soon very plainly discover'd, that the genuine Spirit of true Christianity, is a Spirit of Meekness and Love, a charitable and forbearing Spirit; and that this Spirit, attended with a Conduct suitable to it, is every where recommended and enforc'd by the Gospel of Christ.

And, as to a great many of the most celebrated Controversies in Divinity, I found, that even on that Side, which I apprehended to be erroneous, a great many Things were urg'd, with such a Degree of Plausibility, as might prevail in determining honest and sincere Men to fall in with it.

When I had seriously considered these Things, and had also made some proper Reflections, on the Frailty of Human Nature, and the Prejudices of Education; I did not, in the least, doubt, but that many, who differ'd from me, in the most controverted Points, might be as sincere and honest in their Enquiries as my self, and consequently be equally approv'd of, by an Omniscient and Impartial God: And therefore, instead of pronouncing Damnation against such, or so much as reviling or censuring of them, I resolv'd, that I wou'd love them as Brethren, and entertain as favourable Thoughts of them, as of those, whose Notions happen'd to be agreeable to my own.

I was appointed, at a General Meeting of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of Cumberland and Westmoreland, in 1718, to be the
Preacher

The PREFACE.

V

Preacher at our next Meeting, April 1719; and, upon this Occasion, I presently determin'd to prepare a Discourse in Favour of Moderation and Charity, which had been my darling Principles for some Years: As I had been mercifully deliver'd from an Evil Spirit of Persecution, I gladly laid hold of the Opportunity of discovering my Repentance, and of employing my best Services, toward the strengthening of my Brethren.

Now, as to the Reasons, which have occasion'd this Discourse to be made publick, the Reader may take it thus.

A certain Reverend Brother, who, I hope, is a sincere and honest Man, was greatly offended with the Sermon, and had the Goodness to tell some of his Friends, that he had scarce Patience to stay in the Place of Worship, till I had deliver'd it.

*This presently took Air; and some zealous, unknown Friend, drew up a general, confus'd Charge against me, and transmitted it to London, with a Design, as I have found Reason to apprehend, to sink my Reputation with my Friends there. After some Time, *two of the London Ministers wrote to the Gentleman who was first offended with the Sermon, to desire of him a more full and particular Account of this Matter.*

'Twas then † he gave a free Vent to his

* Mr. Nesbit, and Mr. Bradbury.

† This Reverend Brother has lately done me Justice, as to this Particular, having giv'n it under his Hand, that he believes I have no other Faith concerning the Holy Trinity, than what he has himself: This he had done, without having receiv'd any New Proofs of my Orthodoxy.

Zeal against me, telling them, that, as to the Business of Arianism, he believed all the Ministers had the same Sentiments they always entertain'd, unless the Preacher was gone into the New Scheme.

I now suffer under this Reproach, in common with a great many of my worthy Brethren, in London, and elsewhere; because I, as well as they, declare against making any Human Forms the Tests of Orthodoxy.

I hop'd that I had satisfy'd my Jealous Brother, as to my Orthodoxy, with Respect to the true Divinity of our Blessed Lord: For when a Declaration of our Faith, as to this Particular, was requir'd, I deliver'd my self in these Words; I believe, according to the Scriptures, that Christ made the World; and that he who made the World is Eternal God. He publicly own'd himself satisfy'd with this Declaration: But, alas! Zealous Orthodox Brethren find it to be no very easy Matter, to get rid of their Suspicions of Heresy, when once they have been possess'd by them.

Matters being thus represented at London, it was resolv'd by some of my warm Brethren there that I shou'd not go unpunish'd; accordingly I am made to feel the Weight of the malignant Influence of Protestant Popery: They are agreed, to persecute me, to the utmost extent of their Power.

Blessed be God, the Secular Arm is not, and I hope never will, be at their Service: But if they cannot kill, they can beat their Fellow-Servant. Oh! with what Zeal, have they labour'd to wound my Reputation, in order to rob me of
my

my Bread, where-ever they had Hopes that their charitable Representations of me might be of any Service this Way! And it must be own'd, that they have the Satisfaction, to see their kind Endeavours, every where, prove successful.

My Congregational Brethren, think me unworthy to receive any further Supplies from their Fund: And a valuable Gentleman, from whom I have formerly received several Favours, has, of late, neglected me, as I have too much Ground to suspect. Nay, such has been their Zeal, in misrepresenting me, and so prevailing has it prov'd, that even the Good, the Charitable Mr. H—rly, has thought fit to pass me by, in his last Distribution of, &c. notwithstanding that he has had it under the Hands of my neighbouring Brethren, that they believe me to be orthodox; and that the only Reason why I refuse to submit to an humane Test, in Matters of Faith, is the Fear of giving up my Liberty as a Christian, as a Protestant, and as a Protestant Dissenter.

What Pity is it, that the kind Contributions of so many honest Christians, shou'd be made subservient to the unreasonable Passions of peevish, and ambitious Men!

Endeavours have been us'd by some at London, to prejudice my People against me, and cut off my Usefulness. At one Time, it was mov'd to some of them, that they should make a Declaration against the Antitrinitarian Doctrines; at another Time, that they should manifest some Dislike of my Principles, otherwise they could not expect any Thing from Pinners Hall Fund, if ever I should leave 'em. And a certain Gentleman, to whom I had wrote very freely, in my own Vindication, was so civil to me, as to expose my Letter to a busy Zealot, and allow him to transcribe it; which, after it had undergone some material Alterations, very much to my Disadvantage, was transmitted to one of my Hearers, to be, by him, if judg'd proper, communicated to my People.

I cannot but observe from hence, that Nine or Ten Pounds a Year, is not below my Adversaries Envy.

I am heartily sorry, that Men, who profess the greatest Zeal against the Impositions of the Established Church, should appear most forward in the Defence of Impositions upon their Dissenting Brethren; and that they who have made the loudest Outcries against Persecution, should take so much Pleasure in persecuting those who differ from them: and that they should be so obstinately bent, in carrying on the fatal Design.

For my own Part, I cannot but think it incumbent upon me, to appear in the Defence of my injured Reputation. And here, I submit to the impartial Examination of every candid and judicious Reader, what I delivered in the Hearing of my Brethren; and for which, I have suffered the Loss of every Thing, that my mistaken Persecutors could deprive me of.

I have great Satisfaction in the Review of what I have done; and, with all my Soul, in this publick Manner, contribute my poor Assistance, toward the Support of the glorious Cause of Christian Charity, and Christian Liberty; in the Defence of which, there is, at this Day, so brave an Appearance, both in the Established Church, and among the Dissenters.

Before I conclude this Preface, I cannot but observe, that I had composed the following Discourse, some Time, before I had any Notice of the unhappy Differences among the Ministers at London.



2 T I M. ii. 24.

*The Servant of the Lord must not
strive, but be gentle unto all
Men.*



I E R C E Contentions a-
bout Matters of Religion,
eat out the very Vitals of
true Godliness; and break
in upon Christian Charity,
the most essential Character,
and distinguishing Badge,
of our Holy Profession. Wrangling censori-
ous Disputants are the great Troublers of
Zion; and therefore the Apostle, *St. Paul*,
gives it in Charge to his Son *Timothy*, One
of the first Ministers of the Christian Church,
and a Pattern to those who succeed him, in
the same Office, to avoid striving Debates,
and whatever may have a Tendency that
Way. He particularly enjoins him to *avoid*
foolish and unlearned Questions, it being too
well known that they usually gender Strifes;
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and he adds, *The Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all Men.* He may dispute and contend for the Truth, for momentous Truths especially; but he must not *strive*, he must not *contend after a fierce irritating censorious Manner*; let the *Defence be mild and peaceable*. Let Patience, and Meekness, and Gentleness, appear conspicuous in the whole Deportment of a Christian, and especially of a Minister, towards those who differ from him.

'Tis the evident Design of the Apostle, in our Text, to recommend to all Christians, especially Ministers, a meek and peaceable Behaviour towards all who in Judgment differ from them.

So that the Subject of my Discourse shall be this One plain Proposition.

The Behaviour of God's Servants, especially of Ministers, to all who are of a different Perswasion in Matters of Religion, must be meek, friendly and peaceable.

'Tis certain that one Part of Holy Scripture doth not contradict another, and therefore it must not be imagined that the following Texts can any way weaken the Force of the Apostle's Direction we have now before us. * *Earnestly contend for the Faith which was once deliver'd unto the Saints.*

* Jude iii.

We may, we ought to, be *Zealous* in the Defence of Christianity, and not suffer the Foundations thereof to be shaken, thro' any Lukewarmness of ours; but still, Love, and Meekness, and common Justice, which are due to all Mankind, should be predominant; and appear conspicuous in our whole Conduct, towards erroneous Contenders; their Errors, tho' great, will by no Means justify factious Wrath, and unrighteous Calumny.

* *St. Paul wisheth that they were even cut off which trouble the Church:*

Cut off from the Church's Communion; but not from common Charity. Christian Discipline must not be neglected, and the Exercise thereof is no Way inconsistent with the Direction in the Text. † *Hereticks must not be rejected till they are instructed once and again.* And, if this Method fails of bringing them to Repentance, they are to be cast out of the Church; but not with a Spirit of Bitterness and Enmity, but with a compassionate Concern for their Souls; and with a sincere Design of recovering them out of the Snare of ~~the~~ *Such Men*, in the Apostles Days, were ** *delivered unto Satan for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord.*

Christ proclaimeth the †† *Hatred of his Soul against the Doctrine of the Nicholaitans.*

* Gal. v. 12. † Tit. iii. 10. ** 1 Cor. v. 5. †† Rev. ii. 15.

'Tis certain that as our Saviour Christ hated all licentious Doctrines, and Actions, we also ought to hate them; we are not to be indifferent to Truth and Falshood, to Good and Evil; but yet, there is still Room for Meekness, common Justice, and Charity.

Having thus briefly cleared my Way of seeming Difficulties, that might have risen in your Minds, and in some Measure obstructed the Design of this Discourse; I shall proceed to the Consideration of the Proposition now before us.

Only give me Leave to tell you, that I do not intend that every Thing I say on this Subject should be apply'd to such, as either teach another Gospel, or advance such Notions, as *plainly* and *directly* break in upon, and subvert the very Foundations of Christianity. I say, *plainly* and *directly*; for 'tis not doubted but some Christians, of whom we have good Hope, maintain Errors, from which Consequences, dangerous to Christianity, may be easily deduced; who yet do not see those Consequences, and who utterly abhor them.

I desire that my Discourse may be chiefly apply'd to Differences about the more difficult, abstruse, and doubtful Points of Religion; and to such as are of little Moment to the Church of Christ, however determin'd.

I shall pursue the following plain and obvious Method.

I. I shall put you in Mind *how*, or in *what Instances*, we must discover a meek, friendly, and peaceable Temper, towards those that differ from us in Matters of Religion.

II. I shall give you some Reasons which oblige us to such a Temper and Deportment.

III. I shall propose some Directions which I apprehend may be of Service to promote such a Behaviour.

IV. I shall make a Reflection, or Two.

I am, in the first Place, to put you in Mind *how*, or in *what Instances*, we must discover a meek, friendly, and peaceable Temper, towards those who differ in Matters of Religion.

i. We must discover this moderate and gentle Disposition, by regarding as much those Things wherein we agree, as those wherein we differ; and if they are of greater Moment, must see that they have the greater Weight with us, and must bear with one another till we can be more unanimous in other Points. * *Let us, saith the Apostle, as many as be perfect, be thus minded, and if in any Thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we*

* Phil. iii. 15, 16.

have already attained, let us mind the same Things.

Most of the different Professors, amongst Christians, agree in Points of Faith and Practice, that are of much greater Importance than those are in which they differ ; and we may also add, that it would be found, upon a just Computation, that those Truths, both *speculative* and *practical*, wherein they universally agree, are greatly superior in Number, to those wherein they differ. 'Tis therefore contrary to Christian Charity and Moderation, to be always magnifying the Number and Quality of the Points in Controversy, and to over-look, in a great Measure, the numerous important Truths, wherein we agree with an hearty Consent. Let the vast Number of Divine Truths, Promises, and Threatnings, which the different Sects of Christians most certainly believe, have their due Weight with us, as well as their Errors, in passing a Judgment upon them, and in regulating and determining our Deportment towards them.

2. We must discover a moderate and gentle Disposition, by studying more to find out Means and Terms of Peace, than Matters of Quarrel, and Weapons of Contention. We shou'd study more to make up, than to widen our Breaches ; we shou'd readily fall in with any reasonable Method of Accomodation, and shou'd not aggravate every little Difference, and magnify every small Difficulty in our Way.

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Are we not commanded to * *follow Peace with all Men*; and to † *keep Peace, and pursue it*? I know not how those Men will answer it to the God of Peace, who, instead of following after the Things that make for Peace, rack their Inventions to find out new Difficulties, in order to perplex and embarrass any Measures that are taken for the Peace and Unity of Christian Professors.

3. We must discover a moderate and gentle Disposition, by forbearing to charge those who differ from us, with the evil and absurd *Consequences* of their Opinions, and by charging them only upon their Principles. Tho' Mens Opinions ought to be charg'd with all the absurd and evil Consequences which naturally flow from them, yet Charity forbids us to charge those of our Brethren with them, who may maintain the Principles from which they flow, if they perceive not those Consequences, nor own and acknowledge, but disclaim and detest them. It is certainly the Height of Uncharitableness, in such a Case as this, to tell them that they prevaricate in such a Declaration; and that they both see and maintain the Consequences, tho' when they are charg'd Home with the Absurdities thereof, for Decency's Sake, they disclaim them.

* Heb. xii. 14.

† 1 Pet. iii. 11.

4. We must discover a moderate and gentle Disposition towards those who differ from us, by contending *amicably* in the Defence of what we apprehend to be the Truth. There were Errors crept into the *Corinthian Church*; in the Apostle's Days; otherwise whence arose their Divisions, whence came it to pass, *that some were of Paul, and some of Appollos, and some of Cephas, and some of Christ*, if not from some Errors broach'd amongst them? And yet, observe after what a friendly Manner the *Apostle* addresses his Epistle to them. He calls them his * *Brethren*, a Name of Union and Friendship, twice together, at the Entrance thereof.

To assault an Adversary, or to defend the Truth against his Assaults, in a reproachful abusive Style, is not of any Service either to Truth or Charity, but manifestly tends to the Subversion of both. Does the Disputer argue for the Conviction of his Opponent? Then I'm sure, the Apostle's Rule is, † *in Meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth.*

I shall conclude this Head, with reminding you, that ‡ *Michael, the Arch-Angel, who contended with the Devil, disputing about the Body of Moses*, is mark'd with a Character of Honour, in Regard he used no reviling Speeches against him.

* 1 Cor. x. 11.

† 2 Tim. ii. 25.

‡ Jude ix.

5. We must discover a moderate and gentle Disposition, by speaking candidly of those who differ from us, not censuring and blotting the Names of one another. Charity obliges us to put the most favourable Construction upon Mens Words and Actions. *Charity thinketh no Evil, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things.*

Are there not, my Brethren, Tongues enough, in the World, sharpened against Ministers especially ; so that they have little Need, of all People, to wound one another with their own Tongues ? Is it not enough that all manner of Evil is falsely spoken of us, by an ungodly and untoward Generation, and that we are made the Scorn and Off-scouring of all Things, but we must also hate and revile one another ?

Let Ministers, for Shame, give over censuring and reproaching one another, on the Account of their different Apprehensions of Things doubtful and unnecessary.

Let not any of us, who admire the *Learning* and *Judgment* of Mr. Calvin, join with him in reproaching those who are of a different Perswasion from him, in Matters of Religion ; let us rather be concerned to find such an *Allay* to his great *Learning* and *Piety*, in the * Reproaches, which he casts with

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so

* Having been charg'd with pouring Contempt upon Calvin, and treating his Memory with Indecency and Reproach ; I

so much Bitterness, on those who durst oppose his celebrated Scheme of Doctrines.
How

am under a Necessity of pleading in my own Defence. In this Passage, which has fallen under the heaviest Resentment, I was endeavouring to recommend to my Brethren, that peaceable Temper, that Gentleness of Spirit, which become the Messengers of Peace, the Servants of the meek and dispassionate Jesus. It has been, not only my own, but the Observation of much wiser Men, that we are partially blind, with Reference to the Infirmities and Faults of those, whom we greatly admire; and that we are apt to claim large Measure of Allowance, in Copying their Examples. I am heartily sorry to find that any of my Brethren, were unable to bear the Intimation. It was remote from my Design, that they shou'd be fresh and notorious Instances, in which the Observation might be verifi'd. However, might I be the mean, the unworthy Instrument of promoting a better Temper among Brethren, of curing them of an almost Idolatrous Fondness for great Names, which is apt to withdraw them from the sole Regard to the Christian Prophet, I'd be content to suffer much more than I have done.

Notwithstanding the Freedom I have used with One of these Great Names, I can honestly and openly declare, that the Learning, the Acuteness, the admirably Stile, the most lively Images, the Piety, the indefatigable Industry and Courage of Mr. Calvin, have always been in Honour and Esteem with me. The successful Part he had, in the difficult and the glorious Work of the Reformation, is a lasting Honour to him, and shou'd be enough to endear his Memory to Protestants, at any Distance of Time.

I believe the Providence of God made Choice of a proper Instrument, and that a Man, furnish'd with less Zeal and Resolution, might have been less fit to make his Way thro' all the Terrors of this World, which guarded the Darkeness, the Corruptions, and Secular Interests of the Church of Rome. The glowing Heat, however, of his Temper, laid him open to some Surprizes, which were Matter of his own Lamentation, and in which he deserves no Imitation.

How did this *Great Man* make too free with the most Divine Laws of Charity, and Moderation, when, in the Face of the World, he called his Adversaries, *Men, void of Godliness, impudent Impostors, filthy Doers, Confederates with wicked Knaves, and devoted to the Interest of Satan?* *

Calvin calls this *Spirit of Detraction*, in himself, *Impatience*; and owns that he had many hard Struggles with it, and not without some Success, but could not bring it into due Subjection. † All

I am not unapt to believe, that his great Reputation, and the constant Hurry he was in, might strengthen the Natural Impatience of his Temper. The Care of the growing Reformation, in France, in Germany, in Poland, and here in England, lay constantly upon his Heart and Hands. His Institutions in particular, are a Work that claims our Wonder and Surprise, especially when his Youth, and the Circumstances of the Times are consider'd. He was born July 10. 1509. and the Preface to his Institutions is dated at Basil, Aug. 1536.

To conclude, I have not suffer'd under a Charge of Falshood, but of Imprudence; so that I might, upon a Confession of this Fault, have hop'd for Charitable Allowances, from all those who are sensible they have ever done an imprudent Thing themselves; and I have this Advantage to expect, that those who have pursu'd me so warmly, with this Charge, will, out of Modesty, suffer the Ashes of Mr. Baxter, and other great Men, to sleep without Disturbance.

* See particularly a Letter which Calvin writ to Rhoan, against a certain Franciscan. Opusc. p. 309, &c. See also Calvin. Tractat. Theol. Respons. ad Baldvini Convitia. p. 427, 429. & alibi ibid. See also, Calvin. Epist. p. 135.

† 'At verum fatear, nulla mihi cum maximis, & plurimis vitiis meis, difficilior est lucta, quam cum ista Impatientia; neq; certe nihil proficio, sed nondum id sum consecutus, ut Belluam plane domuerim.' This Passage is in a Letter, which Calvin writ to Bucer, and may be seen quoted by Vossius; Epist. 457. p. 403.

All good Men cannot but wish, for the Sake of Peace and Charity, that none of *Calvin's* greatest Admirers may be tempted to imitate his abusive, reproachful Method, of dealing with an Adversary.

I do not pretend to know what Truth there is in *Grotius's Remark*, that for the most part, *Men imitate the Manners of those they have made Choice of for their Masters and Oracles, in Matters of Opinion in Religion*; but, I shou'd be sorry for the Truth of what he is pleased to affirm, that *whereas Melancthon's Disciples are generally very mild and gentle; those of Calvin, on the contrary, are Men of a rough and unfriendly Behaviour towards those who differ from them in Matters of Religion.* *

6. We must discover a moderate and gentle Disposition, by forbearing to rack the Consciences of one another with *Subscriptions to human Creeds*. A Tyrannical inforcing our own *deify'd Phrases and Interpretations* of God's sacred Word on the Consciences of others, is no less than a setting up for *Rabbies, Fathers, and Masters in Religion*, and has been one of the chief Fountains of the Schisms and Desolations of the Christian Church. This is such a Violence done to our Brethren, as, according to the Observation of a great Man, "tears into Picces, not the Coat only, but the

* Grot. Votum pro Pace Eccles. p. 18.

“ very Bowels and Members of Christ, to the
 “ great Satisfaction of *Jews* and Infidels.” *
 When Men set up their own fallible Interpretations for Standards of Faith, by which they pretend we may and ought to judge of Truth and Heresy, and oblige us to subscribe them as the Word of God; or which amounts to the same thing, as containing the real and undoubted Sense of his Word; they visibly detract from the Authority and Sufficiency of the holy Scriptures, and lay unjust Restraints upon our Consciences.

But such is the Nature of a Zeal for Orthodoxy, that is not according to Knowledge; and such are the Effects of an usurp'd Dominion over Mens Reason and Consciences, that if any stand up for the *Honour* of the *holy Scriptures*, and plead that *they* contain fully, and in clear and express Terms, whatever is of *Necessity* to Salvation, to be known, believed, and practised; and insist upon their Liberty of subscribing these, and these only, they are presently branded with Heresy, and set as a Mark for the blind and ungovern'd Populace to vent their Fury upon.

Do not these Servants of the Lord *strive*?
 Is this their Moderation and Gentleness?

Would but Men consider, that *Confessions of Faith*, are really no more than *Declarations of the Faith of those that publish'd them*; that they

* Chilling. Rel. of Prot. Ch. 4. §. 16.

are not so much Declarations what Men ought to believe, as what they themselves, fallible both in their Opinions and Interpretations, at present believe to be true; they would no more make use of them as *spiritual Bonds*, to tie up Mens Consciences, Tongues, and Pens, from varying from their Phraseology or manner of treating of the deep Things of God.

And would they but also consider *Ezekiel's Commination* against those that *falsly say, Thus saith the Lord* *; they would perhaps think it to be their safest Method to speak of the more dark and doubtful Points of Religion, in the Language of the Scriptures, rather than in that of fallible and partial Men; and to leave their Brethren at full Liberty to take the same Course.

I cannot conclude this Head, without quoting a Passage to our purpose out of Mr. *Chillingworth*, which he often makes use of with great Advantage to the Cause of the Reformation.

“ I am fully assured, says he, that God does
 “ not, and therefore that Man ought not, to
 “ require any more of any Man than this, to
 “ believe the Scripture to be God's Word, to
 “ endeavour to find the true Sense of it, and
 “ to live according to it. †

Let this be apply'd particularly to the Case of *Candidates* for the Ministry, who have a competent Measure of useful Learning.

* *Ezek. xiii. 7, 8, 9.*

† *Chilling. Rel. of Prot. Ch. 6. §. 56.*

7. We must discover a moderate and gentle Disposition, by abstaining from *Anathematizing those who differ from us in the more doubtful, and less necessary Points of Religion.* How prodigal soever the different Parties in Religion, in almost every Age of the Christian Church, have been of their *Anathemas*, which they poured out one against another, as against so many *Sects of Hereticks*; 'tis certain that, by doing this, they violated, for the most part, the great *Law of Christian Moderation and Charity*, and greatly deviated from the Practice and Example of the Apostle St. Paul, who only pronounced an *Anathema* against *profane Persons*, and *Preachers of another Gospel*. * *If any Man, says he, love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.* And, *tho' we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* †

Let those, who know of any other *Anathemas* in the New Testament, produce them.

'Tis *dreadful striving* indeed, wholly inconsistent with the *charitable and gentle Spirit*, which Christianity recommends to its Professors, to separate Christians from the Church, and to shut Heaven against them, either upon trivial Causes, or on the Account of different Apprehensions of such Things as are not clearly revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

* 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

† Gal. i. 8.

II. I shall now proceed, in the Second Place, to give you some Reasons why we ought not to strive, but to be gentle unto all Men differing from us in Matters of Religion.

1. Many Places in Scripture, upon which several Doctrines are grounded, are *Ambiguous*; and may, with great Probability, be urged in divers Senses. None can doubt of this, who have carefully examined the various Interpretations which Men of different Judgments have given us of such Texts of Scripture, as the several Parties press into the Service of their jarring Principles. How plausible are the several Interpretations, tho' very different one from another! Now when the Case stands thus, 'tis no Wonder that Men embrace different Interpretations; and it would certainly be very unkind and uncharitable for either Party to charge the other with damnable Heresy, for differing in Opinion from them.

2. The Points in Controversy may be such, as that *Scripture* may, with great Probability, be alledg'd on both Sides. None can doubt of this, who have been in any Measure conversant with Writers of Controversy, and have considered the several Defences, which are made in Favour of opposite Opinions. Each Party plead *Scripture*, and pretend to be very much determin'd in their Judgment by it; and the several Texts of *Scripture*, which they urge in Favour of their Opinions,
are

are alledg'd with so much Probability, as obliges us in Charity to hope, that they are *truly Lovers of God and of Truth*, notwithstanding the Difference of their Opinions from many of their Brethren.

'Tis certain, indeed, that, in this Case, some of these disagreeing Parties, who urge Texts of *Scripture*, in Favour of such opposite and disagreeing Principles, maintain Opinions contrary to the true and real Meaning of the Scriptures. But then, as Scripture is alledg'd with so great Probability, in Favour of the erroneous Opinion, 'tis not only plain, that the Point in Controversy is not necessary, but also that the erring Party may really believe, that what they maintain is agreeable to the *true Purport* and Meaning of the *Holy Scriptures*.

Behold a clear Ground for mutual Forbearance ; and a strong Disswasive from judging imperiously, and rashly censuring one another !

3. Some Things, about which there is a mighty Bustle amongst Men, heated with Prejudice, and Party Zeal, are really, in their own Nature, very Dark ; if not Incomprehensible. And what Madness is it for fallible Men, subject to err in Matters much more obvious to reason, to reproach and condemn one another for Difference in Opinion in such Cases ?

What a Stir have some Men made, about *Grace* and *Free-Will*, and how liberal have they

they been of their *Anathemas*; and yet, whoever will give themselves Leave to consider the Matter carefully and impartially, will find that there's an Unfathomable ~~Base~~ in these Things, and be convinced that Men ought to be very modest and moderate in every Thing respecting such high and abstruse Points as these; and that it becomes them to cry out, with humble Admiration, * *How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!*

They, who will not own that there are great Difficulties in Divinity, do but betray their own Ignorance and Unacquaintedness with the Writings of Divines, as well as with the Holy Scriptures, and particularly the Account which St. Peter gives us of St. Paul's *Epistles*, who tells us, that *there are many Things in them hard to be understood.*

Let this teach us Charity and Moderation.

'Tis easy for Men, in the Midst of so much Darkness, who find themselves press'd, on all Hands, with Difficulties, not easily surmounted by their finite shallow Capacities, to err from the Truth; and will you say, that Men, who differ from them in such Cases as these, are, on that Account, guilty in the Sight of God? O judge no!

4. Most of the Points in Controversy, which are agitated with so much Heat, and

* Rom. xi. 33.

so little Charity, by the contending Parties, are, if not dark in themselves, yet very much obscured by their Logical Fallacies, and crabbed *Metaphysical Distinctions*; whereby they have, in a great Measure, turned Men from the Simplicity which is in Christ, and made it much more easy to mistake the Truth, than find it. Subtil Wits have the Art of distinguishing Truth out of Sight; and of betraying Men, by an Heap of *Sophisms*, into Opinions, which are not only false, but dishonourable to God, and injurious to True Religion.

The Opinion which makes God the *necessitating Cause* of Sin, subverts Christianity, if not all Religion; and yet, Mr. *Baxter*, who was as quick at spying the Fallacy of an Argument as any other Man, owns oftener than once, that he was very much press'd with some Difficulties started by the Maintainers of this absurd and hateful Opinion.

" I deny not, says he, that I find the
 " Controversy in it self exceeding difficult,
 " and that I have not been without Temp-
 " tation to their Opinion, nor yet am. I
 " confess their Arguing is very plausible; yet,
 " says he, if I receive it, I must let go
 " almost all Religion, as well as Christia-
 " nity." *

Now, my Brethren, if such a Man as Mr. *Baxter* was in Danger of being betray'd, by

* Baxt. Cath. Theol. Lib. II. p. 152. See also p. 5. *ibid.*

the subtle Disputings of Learned Men, into the Belief of an Opinion which he owns subverts Christianity; How much more easy must it be for the Generality of Christians, and of Ministers too, to be deluded, by plausible Arguments, into the Belief of less dangerous, and less palpable Errors?

'Tis certain that such plausible Things may be said by Men, versed in the Niceties of Schools, in Favour of very erroneous Opinions, as may prevail on wise and good Men.

Here is a Foundation for Charity and Moderation.

5. 'Tis difficult to overcome the Power and Prejudice of Education. All Men are naturally fond of what they have learned in their Youth. And as the Sight, or Remembrance of the Places where they pass'd that agreeable Time, does strangely affect them; in like Manner, they are, generally, so deeply engaged in Favour of such Notions, as they were first acquainted with, that the strongest Arguments for contrary Opinions, can scarce prevail with them to desert these beloved Notions; for which Reason a due Allowance shou'd be made them.

Such is the almost unavoidable Prejudice of Education, that many Men cannot see the Force of Arguments which make for the contrary Truths; which, tho' it may be a Fault in them, yet it cannot be deny'd that it is a Fault, which very good and honest Men are often guilty of.

In

In this Case, we should make the same Allowances in Favour of such as differ from us, which we would expect from them in our own Favour; and should think with our selves, that had our Education and Acquaintance, with a great many other Circumstances, been the same with those of the Persons, from whom we dissent, we might have had just the same Sense of the Matters in Controversy which they have.

It may not here be improper to put you in Mind how Bishop *Burnet*, when pleading the Cause of Moderation, applies the Argument we are now urging, with the same View to the Doctrine of *Predestination*.

“ It’s certain, says he, that one who has
 “ long interwoven his Thoughts of infinite
 “ Perfection, with the Notions of absolute
 “ and unchangeable Decrees, of carrying on
 “ every Thing by a positive Will, of doing
 “ every Thing for his own Glory, cannot
 “ apprehend Decrees depending on a fore-
 “ seen Will, a Grace subject to it, a Merit of
 “ Christ’s Death that’s lost, and a Man’s
 “ being at one Time loved, and yet finally
 “ hated of God, without Horror.

“ And, on the other Hand, a Man that
 “ has accustomed himself to think often
 “ of the infinite Goodness and Mercy that
 “ appears in God, cannot let the Thought
 “ of absolute Reprobation, or of determin-
 “ ing Men to Sin, or of not giving them the
 “ Grace necessary to keep them from Sin
 “ and

“and Damnation, enter into his Mind,
 “without the same Horror that another feels
 “in the Reverse of all this.” *

6. Controversies in Religion are many of
 'em about *Words* only. 'Tis obvious to ob-
 serve, that in many of them, the Dispute is
 about the *Grammatical Sense* of Words, or in
 what Manner Things, wherein any impartial
 Person may easily observe an Agreement, are
 to be express'd; or what shall be the Extent
 of the Signification of Words capable of a
 larger or stricter Acceptation: Nay, often-
 times, Men purely fight against one another's
 Words, and Phrases, without any Knowledge
 of the several *Ideas* and *Notions*, which each
 Party would express by them, being truly, in
 this Respect, as *Barbarians* to one another.

I believe it would be found, upon a care-
 ful Examination, that the Famous Controver-
 sy betwixt the *Remonstrants* and *Contra-Re-*
monstrants, is chiefly about meer Names and
 Words; or about Things unintelligible in our
 present State.

And, as for the Controversies about *Justi-*
fication, which were first set on Foot at the
 Beginning of the Reformation, and manag'd
 then, and in later Times, with so much Zeal,
 as if the whole of Religion depended on the
 right Determination thereof; it is pretty ap-
 parent to any, who duly consider the Matter,
 that they are chiefly about the Manner of

expressing Things in which all Parties agree, or about the Extent of Words, capable of a larger or a more restrained Signification.

It must be owned, indeed, that some Expressions, made use of in this Controversy, by good and honest Protestants, are very harsh, and afford too much Ground of Reproach, to Papists and Infidels.

But, if all of us are agreed about the real Points of Doctrine, shall we quarrel about Words and Phrases? How contrary is this to the Charge which *Timothy* is directed to give to Ministers! * *Charge them before the Lord, says St. Paul, that they strive not about Words to no Profit; but to the subverting of the Hearers.*

7. Men may entertain Principles, which are dangerous in their Consequences to Religion; which Consequences, nevertheless, they may either not see, or if they do see them, may be so fully perswaded of the Truth of their Principles, as to look upon them only as Objections which they know not how to answer. They, in this Case, still maintain, that they are thoroughly convinced of the Truth of their Opinions, and abhor the Consequences which at present seem deducible from them.

Is not this an Argument for Moderation? Is here no Foundation for Charity?

8. Men, who differ from us, and who maintain Opinions which we think are of dangerous Tendency to Religion, may, on the other Hand, be fully perswaded that they make for the Honour of some of the Divine Attributes; that the Wisdom, or the Mercy, or the Justice, or the Sovereignty of God, are thereby rendered conspicuous.

They, who say that *Moral Good and Evil* are necessitated by God, think that an admirable Harmony ariseth from thence; and that the contrary Doctrine would cross the Nature of God, of the Creature, of the Soul, and the Unity and Harmony of all Things.

The *Remonstrants* think that by their Opinions they maintain the Honour of God's Justice, Holiness, Goodness and Mercy.

And, on the other Hand, the *Contra-Remonstrants* think, that by their Opinions they maintain the Honour of God's *Grace, Independency, and absolute Sovereignty*; so that both these Parties (who have often canvass'd their Notions with a great Vehemence of Dissention and Strife, and discovered an unbecoming Alienation of Affection, one from another, on the Score of their Opinions, which they look upon as dishonourable to God;) appear to be Lovers of God, and zealous for his Glory.

This we should esteem to be a Ground for Moderation and Charity.

9. In the *Ninth*, and last Place, tho' Men differ from us in Opinion, unless we have
good

good Reason to believe that they call God's Veracity in Question, we ought to be gentle and moderate.

It is damnable, indeed, to deny Truths testify'd by God, if we know that they are thus testify'd by him; because this is plainly to give him the Lie. But, if we deny a Divine Truth, not believing that it is testify'd by God, such a Denial is by no Means damnable, unless our not seeing it to be a Divine Truth, is owing to a voluntary and avoidable Negligence.

If the several Parties of Christians, who differ from us, profess that they firmly believe, that all which God says is true; and that the Ground of what they maintain is God's undoubted Truth; shall we still strive against them as designedly undermining Religion, and as Betrayers of God's Sacred Truths?

We are well assured that many, who hold Opinions different from our own, are Men of very sober and exemplary Lives, constant and serious in their Devotions to God, and mindful not only of their own Things, but also of the Things of others; and we have made it appear, that several Reasons may concur to incline Men, who use their best Endeavours to avoid all Errors in Religion, to embrace Opinions contrary to some Truths delivered in the Holy Scriptures; and therefore it would be the Height of Uncharitableness, to charge Men of so much Sobriety, and

Men who, for ought we know, are as careful to avoid Errors in Religion as we ourselves, tho' they fall short of the Truth, thro' Human Frailty : I say it would be the Height of Uncharitableness to charge those Men with disputing God's Veracity, by opposing that which they either know to be delivered in the Scriptures, or have not so much as a probable Reason to incline them to believe the contrary.

III. I shall now proceed to give some Directions, which I apprehend may be of Service to prevent striving, and to promote a moderate and gentle Disposition towards those who differ from us, in Matters of Religion.

I. Let us not form our Notions of other Mens Opinions rashly, or upon hearsay only ; but let us be well acquainted with the Doctrines about which 'tis said we differ, reading carefully what the several Parties advance, and what is offered by them, by Way of Explication and Defence. " A hasty judging
" and believing Fame, says Mr. *Baxter*, is a
" Cause of unspeakable Hurt to the World,
" and Injury to our Brethren." * They, who understand the least of the Matters in debate, are generally the most noisy and censorious ; the most prone to judge and revile Men abundantly wiser than themselves :

* *Baxt. Cath. Theol. Lib. I. Part III. p. 107.*

These are the Troubles of *Zion's Peace*; these are the Men, who display their Zeal in abusing their Brethren, when they have the Happiness of being heard by a favourable Audience, and without Fear of being contradicted. * *The Fool rageth, and is confident.*

O would but Men study more! would they but divest themselves of Prejudice, and examine carefully the Points in Controversy, and weigh, in an even Ballance, the Arguments on all Sides, I am perswaded they would be more moderate and gentle in their Deportment, and more charitable in their Speeches, one of another. Would they but suspend their Judgment, till they have carefully read, or maturely considered, whatever is necessary to the right understanding of the Case, we shou'd hear less of their Confidence, less of their bitter and uncharitable Reproaches, and more of their Modesty and Moderation.

2. Let us not *dote about Questions and Strifes of Words*; for, of these, the Apostle tells us, and sad Experience has evinced the Truth of it, † *cometh Envy; Strife; Railings; evil Surmizings; perverse Disputes of Men of corrupt Minds, and destitute of the Truth.*

'Tis in Matters of Opinion, as in those of Practice; Men who are over-fond of little Punctilio's in Practice, as *Tithing Mint* and

* Prov. xiv. 16.

† 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5.

Anice and Cummin, and of observing a Number of Rites and Ceremonies, are usually the most uncharitable Bigots, and the greatest Persecutors of their Brethren; so they who dote about unprofitable Questions, are the most guilty of charging wiser and better Men than themselves with Heresy; and of discharging impious, but vain *Anathemas* against them.

3. Let us be more conversant with the Holy Scriptures, and less fond of *Systems* and our own *imagined Schemes of Religion*. If the most angry and censorious Accusers of their Brethren for differing in Opinion from them, would but examine, with Care and Impartiality, what is the chief Cause of all this Malice and Bitterness, they would probably find too much Ground to suspect, that all their Heat is in Favour of some *Infalible System*; some *Sacred Catechism*; or some *Deify'd Creed*. These *Systems, Catechisms* and *Creeds*, which indeed are useful in their Place, but have often too much Veneration pay'd them, are the Occasion of the greatest Part of that Wrath and Contention, which we every Day observe among Men of different Judgments in Matters of Religion.

These *Systems, Catechisms*, and *Creeds*, are the Touch-Stones, whereby they try the Truth and Falshood of Mens Opinions; and we may add, that they are the Standards, whereby the several Parties interpret such Texts of Scripture, as are most in Dispute, and on the

the Sense of which their Cause principally depends; thus making a Sort of *Idols*, of these *Human Composures*, which might otherwise serve the Purposes of true Religion, Men strive in Defence of them, at the Expence of Charity, and even of common Justice.

Would but Men, instead of borrowing their Notions in Religion, from *Systems*, *Catechisms*, or *Creeds*, which is the great Cause of such ungoverned Zeal in Defence of them, study the Scriptures more, and from *them* learn their Faith, there would, perhaps, be both less Difference in Opinion, and less Heat and Uncharitableness on the Score of unavoidable Differences.

4. Let us not be fond of a Party as such. 'Tis being *zealous Arminians*, *earnest Calvinists*, *rigid Lutherans*, instead of contenting our selves, with being plain and honest Christians, which is one principal Cause of those Contentions and Animosities, which are found among the celebrated Parties.

In the *Corinthian Church* there were Contentions, because some were of *Paul*, and some of *Apollos*, and some of *Cephas*, and some of *Christ*. Thus Men adopt some Famous *Doctor* in *Divinity*, for their Oracle; or factiously join with some particular Sect of Christians, denying almost all Hopes of Salvation to all other Societies; and when this is done, they mark out all that are of a different Perswasion, for the Objects of their Religious Fury.

Would

Would Men be content with being call'd *Christians*, and would they not divide uncharitably from their Brethren, who, in any Point of Opinion or Practice, differ from them ; there would of Necessity be more of Union, and more of mutual Forbearance amongst them ; we should then hear less of Fines and Imprisonments, of Racks and Gibbets, of Cursing and Damning, on the Account of Differences in Religion.

5. Let us prefer Holiness in our Brethren to Orthodoxy ; I mean, to what we our selves esteem to be Orthodox, for no doubt every Sect is perfectly Orthodox in its own Judgment. Did we but duly consider those remarkable Words of St. *John*, * *Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments ; and he that saith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Lyar ; and the Truth is not in him.* I say, did we but duly consider those Words, we should not have such an over-bearing Fondness for Men, who agree with us in Opinion, but live irregular and ungodly Lives ; we should rather suspect, that notwithstanding their high Pretensions to Truth, and their noisy and impertinent Professions of Orthodoxy, they have a thick and gloomy Darkness within over-spreading their Souls.

And, on the other Hand, did we but consider, that Piety is preferable to Faith ; to

Faith, in this Case, taken in the strictest Sense, *i. e.* a meer Assent of the Understanding to the Truth of Things revealed; which certainly must draw its principal, if not all its Excellency, from the Influence it has upon Morality, and which must shortly fail and be lost in Vision; whereas Morality is of a fixed and eternal Nature: I say, would we but seriously consider this Preheminence of Morality to Faith, we should have an high Esteem, and a very tender Regard for an Holy, Humble Christian, of whatever Denomination.

But, 'tis almost natural for Men to prefer Truth to Goodness, and Knowledge to Holiness; and therefore Nothing is more common, than to see them caressing, with the utmost Respect, a sensual profane Wretch, who distinguisheth his Zeal in the Defence of those Opinions, which they have embraced for sacred and undoubted Truths.

And, on the other Hand, we may every Day observe Men, who are more zealous for what they esteem to be true Doctrine, than holy Obedience; discovering the utmost Hatred and Contempt for Men of the most sober and upright Conversations, because they do not favour some darling Notions, which they have made the *Shibboleth* of the Saints.

Such is the intemperate and irregular Zeal of Men, who make a certain Set of Notions the *Alpha* and *Omega* of their Religion; and who think a simple Error to be a much greater

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er Crime, than Sins committed against Knowledge and Conscience; that the most inoffensive and Christian Deportment is no Security against their Malice, and Religious Frenzy, if they once discover a Dislike for any of their darling Notions. Whereas, let a Man be worldly and sensual, let him plainly deny Christ in his Life, if he does but maintain the same Opinions, and cry, in Favour of them, *lo here is Christ! and, lo there is Christ!* he is greatly respected by them; and has very tender Allowances made him. *This is a Lamentation, and shall be for a Lamentation.*

But, let us, I say, to prevent such an unchristian, such a partial Behaviour one towards another, prefer Soundness of Heart, to what we esteem to be Soundness of Mind. Let a Religious Conversation be of more Worth in our Eyes, and recommend a Man more to our Esteem, than a Faith which could even remove Mountains, or a Knowledge, tho' it be of all Mysteries, which is not attended with a predominant Love both to God and Man.

We may easily be mistaken as to the Truth, and Worth, of a great many Opinions in Religion; but, as long as Reason and Revelation are in the World, we cannot but know wherein true Holiness consists; and how highly acceptable it is to that Holy God, with whom all of us have to do.

I might, in the next Place, put them in Mind of the Advantages of Moderation. I
might

might consider its happy Influence in cooling Mens Passions, and in promoting Truth and Unity. But, I shall proceed to make a Reflection, or Two, upon what we have delivered, and then shall conclude.

And first, from what has been said, let us observe wherein a truly Religious Zeal consists. This is the more necessary to be enquired after, because some Men place almost the Whole of their Religion in what they imagine to be such. It is a melancholly Thing to observe, how Men, who live in Drunkenness, and who indulge themselves in several other Kinds of Sensuality, think that they make Amends for all, by earnest Preaching or Disputing against some Opinions thought to be Erroneous; and by Censuring and Anathematizing Men, whose Apprehensions are different from their own: Which Practice of theirs, they would have to pass with the World, as it does, no doubt, with themselves, for a religious and godlike Zeal. And, it affords another melancholly Consideration, that this uncharitable Violence, which they mistake for a Religious Zeal, removes all Remorse for Crimes committed in the Heat of their intemperate Fury, and prevents their Repentance, the only Means of obtaining Pardon of God for their Sins. Men, who are possessed with such mistaken Notions of a religious Zeal, think, that when they have loaded a Man, they have condemn'd to be Heterodox, with Invectives,

or have proceeded so far as to get him Fin'd, or Imprison'd, they have acted gloriously for the Cause of Truth, and done acceptable Service unto God; so that instead of being touch'd with any Remorse, and instead of being thereby induced to apply to God for Mercy, they die in a miserable State of Impenitence.

True Zeal, my Brethren, is of a quite different Nature. The zealous Servant of the Lord does not strive, but is gentle unto all Men. True Zeal, like Faith, worketh by Love. Charity is recommended in the Gospel as a principal Duty; and whatever Zeal is inconsistent with it, is not the true Christian Zeal. The very *Formal Nature* of true Zeal is, *Love*; which always makes the Believer active to Edification, and not to Destruction. This true heavenly Fire, warms us with Love for God and Souls, and makes us ambitious of *keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*. True Zeal is an active Grace; active for the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind; always moving in the Sphere of Love. When once our Zeal carries us beyond the Bounds of Charity; when once it becomes turbulent, and gives Vent to it self, in Acts of Cruelty, Hatred, or Malice; it is no longer a Divine Virtue, a Religious Zeal; but however Glorious it may appear to carnal and unthinking Men, in a Religious Sanctify'd Garb, 'tis degenerated into a Tempestuous Passion, a Factionous Zeal.

If ye have bitter Envyng and Strife in your Hearts, saith St. James, * *This Wisdom is not from above, but is earthly, sensual and* &c. What we read, *bitter Envyng*, is, according to the Original, *bitter Zeal*.

I shall conclude this Reflection, concerning Zeal, with observing, that we have not, as they had, who lived under the *Jewish Dispensation*, a *Law of Zealots*, which empowered Men, acted with a Zeal for God, to commit Violence against some Offenders; (by Virtue of which Law, 'tis thought our Lord whipp'd the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple;) such Men, under the *Christian Oeconomy*, as are fond of an angry Zeal, may exercise it, with as much Heat and Violence as they please, in subduing their own Fleshly Lusts, in pulling down the strong Holds of Sin and Satan, in their own Souls. Men, who are fond of Religious Quarrels, may find Work enough in fighting against the Corruption of their own Hearts. This, this, my Brethren, is the Spiritual Warfare, in which every good Christian must engage, with a manly Resolution, and with an hearty Zeal.

I observe, in the second Place, by Way of Reflection on what has been said, that 'tis the great Duty of Christians to be peaceable. The Servant of the Lord, you see, must not *strive*, but be gentle unto all Men. We ought, both Ministers and People, to live in Peace,

and then the God of Love and Peace will be with us. I shall conclude this Discourse, in those remarkable and important Words of St. James. *Who is a wise Man, and endu'd with Knowledge amongst you, let him show, Out of a good Conversation, his Works with Meekness and Wisdom; but if ye have bitter Envy-ing, or rather bitter Zeal, * and Strife in your Hearts, glory not, and lie not against the Truth: This Wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, &c. &c.;* for where Envy-ing and Strife is, there is Confusion, and every Evil Work. But the Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy.

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* James iii. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

F I N I S.



